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Member of Violent Drug Ring Sentenced to 45 Years in Prison For Slaying of Man He Mistakenly Viewed as a Witness

- More Than 30 Shots Fired at Victim -
- Three Others Were Sentenced Earlier in the Case -

WASHINGTON - Michael Walters, 31, was sentenced today to 45 years in prison for his role in a violent drug conspiracy and his actions as a triggerman in the killing of a man he and others mistakenly thought was a witness, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Walters, of Washington, D.C., was among four defendants convicted by a jury in March 2011 of conspiracy, first degree murder while armed with aggravating circumstances, obstruction of justice, and related firearms offenses. The verdict followed a month-long trial in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Walters was sentenced by the Honorable Thomas J. Motley.

Walters was one of two triggermen in the slaying of Michael Henry, 25, in August 2008. Judge Motley sentenced the other defendants in May 2011. Javon Roberts, 34, the ringleader of the operation, was sentenced to a 48-year prison term. Shawn Curry, 24, the other triggerman in the killing, was sentenced to 42 years of incarceration. Alonzo Marshall, 24, was sentenced to 37 years in prison. All four defendants are from Washington, D.C.

The evidence at trial established that the defendants operated a drug organization for a number of years in the area of 22nd and Savannah Streets SE, selling PCP, cocaine, marijuana and Ecstasy. The organization was set back significantly in August 2008 when members of the Metropolitan Police Department, after having received reliable information, executed a search warrant on the apartment from which the men operated.

In the weeks that followed the raid of the apartment, members of the drug organization tried to uncover the identity of the informant who provided the tip to the police.

These efforts were headed by Roberts, who, as multiple witnesses testified, “called the shots” of the organization. As a result of their investigation, the members of the drug conspiracy mistakenly concluded that the decedent, Michael Henry, had tipped off police.

Thus, on August 30, 2008, Marshall lured the decedent to the 3400 block of 22nd Street, where Walters and Curry were waiting to ambush him. Curry and Walters chased Henry through multiple courtyards in a residential area of Southeast Washington, D.C., shooting at him more than 30 times. Henry was struck twice by the gunfire and died on the scene.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen and Chief Lanier praised the outstanding efforts of members of the law enforcement community in bringing about the successful prosecution. Countless members of the MPD, the FBI’s Washington Field Office, and the U.S. Park Police worked tirelessly in their coordinated efforts. They included MPD Detectives Danny Whalen, Susan Blue, and Jeffrey Mayberry, as well as Officers Christopher Smith, Alvin Lytle, Dwayne Mitchell, and Natasha Pettus, along with U.S. Park Police Detective William Sepeck and the FBI.

U.S. Attorney Machen and Chief Lanier also commended the efforts of those at the U.S. Attorney’s Office who worked on the case, including Intelligence Analyst Lawrence Grasso; Litigation Specialist Leif Hickling; M. Laverne Forrest, Debra Cannon, Shawn Slade, and Katina Adams, of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit, and Paralegal Sharon Newman.

Finally, they praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Laura Bach and Seth Waxman, who investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bach and Todd Gee, who tried the case.

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